

**Preliminary Petition to the Wellesley Historical Commission  
for the Standish Road Neighborhood to be Designated  
a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD)**

We, the undersigned property owners of Standish Road, Brewster Road, Dudley Road, Carver Road, and Priscilla Road, Wellesley, Massachusetts are petitioning the Town of Wellesley to designate our neighborhood as a Neighborhood Conservation District under the provisions of the Town Bylaw that were adopted in Article 58 at the Annual Town Meeting of May 1, 2007 (Town Bylaws, Article 46A). Following the requirements of the Bylaw, this petition contains the following:

- I. Character of the Neighborhood
- II. Map and Definitions of the Standish Estates NCD Boundaries
- III. Guidelines Proposed for Review of New Construction

**I. CHARACTER OF THE STANDISH ESTATES NEIGHBORHOOD**

Residents of the Standish Neighborhood feel that they are part of a unique and distinctive neighborhood that is private, protected, set apart, yet close to the centers of Wellesley Hills, Wellesley Square and Lower Falls. The natural boundaries of Worcester Street/Route 9 to the north, Longfellow Pond and the Town Forest to the east, Oakland Street to the south, and Mass Bay Community College to the west define the perimeter of an area that is quiet, cohesive and stable. Some long-time residents have even moved from one house to another, staying within the bounds of this neighborhood.

The Standish Estates was a subdivision of land once owned by Nathan Longfellow, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century paper manufacturer who owned a paper mill at the pond that now bears his name. In 1938, Maurice Dunlavy carved out the initial portion of the land, forming the northern end of Standish Road that extended to Priscilla Road, the first few lots on Priscilla and Carver Roads, and the entire length of Brewster Road. Dunlavy lived in the neighborhood while he built it. Many of the houses are (or were adapted from) Royal Barry Wills' architectural plans. Although the houses differ in style and size, they complement each other and share a common scale or massing. In 1940, the southern portion of Standish Road was subdivided, connecting the neighborhood to Oakland Street. In 1947, there was an additional subdivision of this area, starting beyond Brewster Road and continuing towards Longfellow Pond. Carver and Priscilla Roads were extended. Winslow and Dudley Roads were delineated. Before this subdivision was surveyed, Dudley Road had been the location of a three-story ice house used to store blocks of ice cut from Longfellow Pond that were then sold to residents of Wellesley for their kitchen ice boxes. That building still existed when the first houses in the neighborhood were constructed in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Many of the neighbors enjoy walking the circuit of streets, socializing with other residents. Some follow the Longfellow Pond or Charles River Trails, climbing the eskers within the Town Forest. Others create informal celebrations on Ollie Turner Park at the end of Carver Road. Just about every child who grew up in the neighborhood learned to ride a bike on Brewster Road: it is flat and there is no rush of traffic. And yet, it is a neighborhood that is convenient to Wellesley Hills and also to many of the commuter roads that bisect Wellesley.

Lots in the initial portion of the subdivision (1938) are relatively small, non-conforming by current zoning. The lots defined in 1940, 1947 and later all have at least 15,000 square feet. The original houses were also small with significant setbacks from the street and from abutters. Many houses have had additions, but the owners kept changes to scale. The houses on Standish Road between Priscilla Road and Oakland Street were built to a slightly larger scale by Dunlavy than what he built in the late 1930s. The yards, gardens, greenery and mature trees in the neighborhood contribute to a sense of privacy while maintaining a feeling of openness and friendliness. The architecture is eclectic and includes structures that

were built in many different styles – colonial, cape, split-level, and ranch. This contributes to the sense of character and distinctiveness. All are single-family residences.

## II. MAP AND DEFINITION OF THE STANDISH NEIGHBORHOOD NCD BOUNDARIES

The Standish Road Neighborhood includes properties lining Standish Road, Carver Road, Brewster Road, Dudley Road, and Priscilla Road. The total number of privately owned properties within the area is 49 (see attached map).

## III. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF NEW CONSTRUCTION

What the Standish Road Neighborhood residents want to accomplish with their NCD guidelines is to ensure that any new construction will be in keeping with its existing character. Principle concerns are that any new houses or large additions fit into the neighborhood with respect to height, overall mass and volume, slope drainage and relationship to the natural landscape, preservation of mature trees and vegetation that screens properties from one another. The neighborhood wants to prevent construction of houses that are too large for their lots, overwhelming the abutters and to prevent the degradation of the landscape that often accompanies such construction.

Rather than draw up separate guidelines for height, floor area, or changes in grade and landscaping, the following guidelines use fairly simple criteria to establish what is to be considered compatible or incompatible with the neighborhood. These design guidelines build on existing Town of Wellesley Zoning Bylaws and regulations for design review of commercial and public buildings and they incorporate ideas from the guidelines put forward in the SECTION XVID. LARGE HOUSE REVIEW (Zoning Bylaws), adopted by Town Meeting, November 2007. This is available online at the Town of Wellesley website or at the Planning Department.

1. Guideline on size. *To the extent possible, the size of new construction and additions should be harmonious with that of surrounding homes.* The Zoning Bylaw for Large House Review (XVID) sets the threshold for review of any construction that is greater than 4300 square feet in a 15,000 Residential District. The Standish Road Neighborhood proposal is more protective, wanting to review any new construction or any addition that is greater than 50% of the existing square footage of living space or 1000 square feet whichever is less.

2. Guideline on height and roof lines. *To the extent possible, the height and style of roof lines on additions and new construction should be harmonious with those of surrounding houses.* We recommend that as a general rule, height as measured from the lowest point at ground level on the foundation wall to the roof peak should not exceed 30 feet.

3. Placement on the site. To enhance the sense of neighborhood and the visual attractiveness of the streetscape, we encourage as generous a band of unbuilt space as feasible in front, side, and rear yards. Where the setback is narrow, special attention should be given to shape and height of roof lines to minimize shadows and “looming” over neighboring properties.

4. Guideline on slope, grade, natural topography, and landscape. *To the extent possible, new construction should avoid displacing or disturbing a large area of the existing vegetative cover and natural landscape.*

5. Other: Placement and siting of other exterior features. The Standish Road Neighborhood NCD does not propose any specific guidelines on fences, changes in façade, driveway configuration, or outdoor lighting. These are features, however, that can be well or poorly handled both in siting and design. Property owners are encouraged to be considerate of their neighbors and sensitive to the best interests of the neighborhood as a whole.

#### IV. THE REVIEW PROCESS

The review process will follow the steps spelled out in the NCD Bylaw (46A) adopted by the 2007 Wellesley Town Meeting. *It is up to the NCD Commission to establish whether its recommendations are advisory or mandatory.* The NCD Commission is made of the 5 members and at least 2 alternates, of whom one is designated by the Historical Commission, one by the Planning Board and at least three members and one alternate are residents of the Standish Neighborhood. Following the review of a proposed construction project, the NCD Commission issues a Certificate of Compatibility for structures that fall within the guidelines, or a Certificate of Hardship if the structure falls outside of the guidelines but is nevertheless permitted by the NCD Commission for reasons of hardship. For construction and alterations not exempted from review, it is necessary to receive either a Certificate of Compatibility or a Certificate of Hardship to get a Building Permit.

Review eligibility. The review process will apply to:

- Complete demolition/new construction
- Partial demolition greater than 30% of existing square footage of living area/new construction
- Additions greater than 50% of existing square footage of living space or 1000 square feet, whichever is less
- Change in roofline that increases the height of the main ridge or raises a subordinate ridge above it

Everything else is exempt from review.





- Points of Interest
- Beach
  - Town Building
  - Cemetery
  - College
  - Fire
  - Library
  - Park
  - Parking
  - Police
  - Schools
  - MBTA Commuter Rail Station
  - MBTA Commuter Rails
  - Buildings
  - Permits
  - MA Highways
  - Interstate
  - US Highway
  - State Highway
  - Town Boundary
  - Abutting Towns
  - Abutting Towns Opaque
  - Roads (Edge Of Pavement)
  - Sidewalks
  - Paths
  - Sidewalks & Paved Path
  - Unpaved Paths
  - Parking
  - Open Water
  - Brooks And Streams
  - Active Recreation Areas
  - Golf Course
  - Court, Basketball/Tennis
  - Track
  - Beach
  - Active Rec Areas Fields Only



# Town of Wellesley, MA

RESERVATION

This map is for informational use only. It is not intended to be used for legal purposes. The Town of Wellesley expressly disclaims any liability for damages or losses, including but not limited to, errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided herein.

Printed on 05/16/2014 at 02:54 PM

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